Carson Takes Stand to Deny Any Bribing in Stock-Fraud Case

By ARNOLD H. LUBASCH

Robert T. Carson testified in his own defense yesterday that he neither had asked for any money nor had agreed to try to get any indictments quashed while serving as the administrative aide to Senator Hiram L. Fong of Hawaii.

Mr. Carson, who was suspended by the Republican Senator after bribery charges were filed against him last January, took the stand in his Federal Court trial here to deny that he had participated in a scheme to quash stock-fraud indictments.

The tall, thin, baldish defendant, who said he would be 65 years old next month, disputed the prosecution's contention that he had offered a bribe to Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst in an attempt to block indictments last November.

According to Mr. Carson, he went to see Mr. Kleindienst on Nov. 24 to discuss Senator Fong's efforts to gain a Federal judgeship for Hawaii, but he conceded that he had made a brief reference to an indictment by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Conversation Recalled

"Will you be good enough, Mr. Carson, to tell the judge and the jury what you said to Mr. Kleindienst and what he said to you?" asked Joseph E. Brill, the defense lawyer.

"I said to Mr. Kleindienst that a couple of men had talked to me about a problem they had," Mr. Carson replied, "and they were willing to make a contribution to the Republican party of $50,000 or so.

"Subsequent to their talking to me, I saw in the papers that there was an S.E.C. indictment. I said that I told them there was nothing I could do."

To which Mr. Kleindienst replied, according to the witness:

"You are right, Bob. There is nothing you can do for anyone under indictment."

The Deputy Attorney General of the United States testified on Tuesday that he had not regarded the Carson conversation as a bribe offer at the time but had realized later that it was a bribe offer when he learned Mr. Carson was being investigated.

Donation Offer Conceded

Referring to the two men who had asked for his help in the S.E.C. problem, Mr. Carson said that Joseph Bald and Michael Hellerman had come to his office with an offer to contribute $50,000 or more to the Republican party if help was forthcoming.

"I listened to the story," Mr. Carson recalled. "I said I didn't think there was anything to be done about a situation of that kind, but let me think about it."

"Did you ask for any money?" asked Mr. Brill.

"No, sir," replied Mr. Carson.

"Did you agree to do anything to quash any indictments or any investigations?" Mr. Brill asked.

"No, sir," Mr. Carson replied.

Referring to subsequent meetings in his office last Dec. 1 and Dec. 29, Mr. Carson said he had repeated that he could not help Bald and Hellerman with their S.E.C. problem.

Mr. Carsonexplained that the meetings had been arranged and attended by Edward Adams, an 82-year-old fund-raiser from New York, who was a co-defendant in the Carson case and pleaded guilty before the trial began last week.

Bald, the other co-defendant, pleaded guilty with Adams in the alleged scheme to quash stock-fraud indictments involving Hellerman, who was allegedly dealing with members of organized crime.

Hellerman, who eventually pleaded guilty in his stock case, turned informer in the Carson investigation and enabled an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to infiltrate the alleged bribery scheme.

The F.B.I. agent, Paul J. Brana, used a concealed tape-recorder to transcribe the Dec. 1 and Dec. 29 conversations in Mr. Carson's office, where the senatorial side is alleged to have received $2,500 in cash from Adams.

-Fraud Case

Mr. Carson testified that he had thought the $2,500 was a legitimate political contribution that Adams was delivering from a contributor who was completely unrelated to the S.E.C. matter.

According to Mr. Carson, he put the $2,500 in Senator Fong's office safe, where he normally put cash political contributions, and it remained there until he brought it to court as evidence in his trial.